

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Case File: AA-84060

AK-040-02-EA-029

**Applicant:** Michael Horstman  
Snoozin Moose Guide Service

**Type of  
Action:** Special Recreation Permits (commercial hunting)

**Location:** The Proposed Action affects the BLM-administered lands within Guide Use Area 8-27 near Kodiak, Alaska and more specifically:  
Seward Meridian, T. 27 S., R 21 W., portions of sections of 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, and 34; and all of sections 29, 30, 31, 32, and 33.

**Prepared  
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**Preparing  
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**Date:** September 25, 2002

I. INTRODUCTION

This Proposed Action involves commercial big game guiding use of public lands near Kodiak, Alaska. Although this land has been selected for conveyance by the State of Alaska and has several pending Veteran Native allotment applications, BLM is responsible for management until the land is conveyed. Along navigable water bodies, BLM maintains management authority only for those lands which are above the ordinary high water mark, and the State of Alaska manages land and waters below that mark. For commercial big game hunting guides, authorization will be only for those lands that the operator is authorized to hunt on by the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

A. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action:

Michael Horstman proposes to conduct guided big game hunts on BLM administered lands within Guide Use Area (GUA) 8-27. The land associated with GUA 8-27 is located on the northern portion of Kodiak Island around Kizhuyak and Sharatin Bay.

This type of service is needed to meet the anticipated public demand for quality guided services which provide safe recreation opportunities in remote or relatively inaccessible locations on Kodiak Island, Alaska. Currently there are no other known commercial outfitters that operate in the northern portion of Kodiak Island around Kizhuyak and Sharatin Bay.

B. Conformance With Land Use Plan:

The BLM has not developed a land use plan for the public lands in the Kodiak area. However, this environmental analysis assesses the impacts of the Proposed Action and provides a basis for a decision on the proposal (43 CFR 1610.8(b)(1)).

C. Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, Policies, Plans or Other Environmental Analyses:

A special recreation permit (SRP) is required for commercial recreation use including big game guiding on public land and water pursuant to 43 CFR 8372 and Handbook H-8372-1. With this regulation, an applicant may be authorized to conduct commercial recreation activities on BLM-administered land. The Authorized Officer may issue SRPs for up to five years subject to annual re-authorization. The permittee must satisfactorily meet the requirements associated with the SRP as well as conform with applicable laws and regulations on all other Federal or State administered lands and waters.

Permits from the State of Alaska are required for all services that derive revenue on State lands starting from the first day of occupancy. The applicant has a State of Alaska Guide-Outfitter license to guide in GUAs 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 14.

## II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

### A. Proposed Action:

Mr. Horstman has applied for a Special Recreation Permit to conduct guided brown bear, mountain goat, and deer hunting on BLM administered land from April 1<sup>st</sup> to December 30<sup>th</sup> in GUA 8-27. The season to hunt each species may vary depending on the hunting regulations established by Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) but will fall between these dates. Mr. Horstman operates out of his main camp located on private land near Larson Point (T. 26 S., R. 21 W.). A spike camp located in Sharatin Bay close to Elbow Creek (Sec. 20, T. 27 S., R. 21 W.) on BLM administered land has been requested.

Mr. Horstman has applied to guide on BLM administered land in T. 27 S., R. 21 W., Sections 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34 of the Seward meridian (see attached map). He has requested the use and storage of a 10' x 14' floored weatherport which will be broken down annually at the spike camp location in Section 20. Access to the spike camp location will be by small boat from the main camp and all hunting will be done on foot. Mr. Horstman expects to have no more than six clients a year in this location.

### B. No Action Alternative:

The No Action Alternative would be to deny issuing the necessary recreation permit to conduct commercial big game guiding.

## III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

All of the land described in the Proposed Action has been selected by the State of Alaska as part of its entitlement at statehood, or has been applied for by Alaskan Veteran Natives. BLM is responsible for management of the land until it is conveyed to the State or certificated to the Alaskan Veteran Native applicants. The adjacent landowner (State of Alaska) has been made aware of the application and no response has been received.

### A. Critical Elements:

It has been determined that the following Critical Elements of the human environment are either not present or would not be affected by the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative:

- Air Quality
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)
- Environmental Justice
- Farm Lands (Prime or Unique)

Flood Plains  
Invasive, Non-native Plant Species  
Native American Religious Concerns  
Subsistence  
Water Quality (Surface/Ground)  
Wetlands/Riparian  
Wild and Scenic Rivers  
Wilderness

1. Cultural/Paleontological Resources:

The prehistory of the Kodiak region goes back approximately 7500 years to the beginning of the Ocean Bay tradition. Artifacts and organic remains from these sites indicate a life based upon hunting sea mammals such as sea otters, sea lion, porpoise and whale. The Katchemak tradition from 3800 B.P. (Before Present) to 800 B.P. suggests a continuation of hunting marine mammals with the addition of land mammal hunting and fishing. The villages of this tradition were larger, nets were developed which led to larger catches of salmon and the concurrent development of ground slate ulus helped process the increased food supply. Late in this period, elaborate treatment of the dead appeared. The Koniag period extended from 800 years ago until the Russians arrived in 1763 A.D. During this period a prominent woodworking technology developed. Larger multi-roomed sod houses appeared and a more elaborate ceremonial culture appeared as evidenced by masks, drums, dance rattles, gaming pieces, and other artifacts. The appearance of inaccessible fortress-like sites also indicates the rise of warfare.

2. T&E Species:

There are no rare or sensitive plant species known to occur in the area. However, without an actual survey, there is no way to determine if rare plants do occur on site.

There are no threatened and endangered wildlife species in the area.

3. Wastes (Hazardous/Solid):

All operations utilize small amounts of fuel for cooking, heating and sometimes generators.

B. Vegetation:

Kodiak Island is within the Alaska Peninsula and Southwestern Islands major land resource area. The land associated with Guide Use Area 8-27 is located on the northern portion of Kodiak Island around Kizhuyak and Sharatin Bay. The maritime climate results in lush vegetation which is dominated by dense grasses,

alder, low shrubs and associated forbs, while the wetlands vegetation consists of sedges, grasses and mosses. Low tundra shrubs grow at the higher elevations. Some areas are forested.

C. Land Status:

The lands within the area of the Proposed Action were selected by the State of Alaska as part of its entitlement under the Mental Health Enabling Act. These lands are identified by the BLM as serial number AA108, while the State identifies this parcel as State file number MH-175. Currently, this parcel is Fiscal Year 2002 priority number 18 on the Alaska Conveyance Priority List. Additionally, fifteen Veteran Native allotment applications have been filed for parcels of varying size within this area. If any portion of the land is conveyed, the permit would be automatically cancelled for these lands.

D. Wildlife:

The site of the Proposed Action and surrounding area supports a variety of animal species. Resident populations include black tail deer, mountain goat, brown bear, microtine rodents and at least 50 species of resident and migrant land, water and marine birds. Many migrant birds pass through the area during spring and fall migration, including many raptors, sea birds and neo-tropical land bird species. Shrub and mixed spruce forest habitats provide nesting habitat for land birds and raptors, particularly Bald Eagles. Several species of amphibians occur in the area.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. Impacts of the Proposed Action:

1. Critical Elements:

a. Cultural/Paleontological Resources:

Cultural resources are known to occur within the Game Management area, but the activities performed under this permit should have no impact upon them.

b. Wastes (Hazardous/Solid):

There is a possibility that small amounts of fuel could be spilled. Amounts are small and impacts limited as fuel rapidly evaporates.

c. Invasive, Non-native Species:

Kodiak Island is fairly free of invasive and/or noxious weed species, so care should be taken that any equipment brought into the area is weed free.

2. Vegetation:

Under the Proposed Action, impacts to the vegetation in the project area would be caused by smothering from the weatherport, and trampling of vegetation from foot traffic. These impacts are expected to be minor and short term.

3. Wildlife:

There is potential for encounters with brown bears drawn into hunting camps by the presence of animal carcasses. This may increase the chance of the additional taking of bears for the defense of life or property when bears may not otherwise be taken.

Hunting camps should be kept clean of food and curing meat. Carcasses should be removed from the camp as soon as possible to avoid attracting bears to the site.

B. Impacts of the No Action Alternative:

There is a potential economic loss for the community of Kodiak as well as a loss of recreation opportunities for people desiring access to areas that are otherwise inaccessible to them. There would be no impacts to cultural, vegetation or wildlife resources if commercial guiding use is not authorized.

C. Cumulative Impacts:

The impacts of the guiding use will add to similar impacts to vegetation and wildlife from other guiding operations on non-BLM land. However, the increased use, because of the limited amount and low impact, will not be detectable over the larger area.

D. Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. Any authorization will be subject to the standard Special Recreation Permit stipulations.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

- A. Persons and Agencies Consulted:  
David Kelley - Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources  
Frank McLucas - Afognak Native Corp.  
Mike O'Connor - Ouzinkie Native Corp.
- B. List of Preparers:  
Donna Redding - Cultural, Historic, Paleontological  
Jeff Denton - Subsistence, Wildlife  
Bruce Seppi - Wildlife, T&E, Riparian  
Debbie Blank - Vegetation  
Jake Schlapfer - Recreation  
Dave Doucet - Recreation  
Rodney Huffman - Lands/Realty